AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for forming a transparent conductive film, comprising the steps of applying, onto a base material, a dispersion containing fine particles of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of indium, tin, antimony, and zinc, fine particles of at least one alloy consisting of at least two metals selected from the metals specified above and aluminum or a mixture of these fine particles; firing a coated layer in an atmosphere which never undergoes any oxidation of the foregoing metal and/or alloy; and subsequently firing the layer in an oxidizing atmosphere at a temperature of not more than 300° C to thus form a transparent conductive film.

2. (Original) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 1, wherein the non-oxidizing atmosphere is one selected from the group consisting of a vacuum atmosphere, an inert gas atmosphere and a reducing atmosphere.

3. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises the step of firing the coated layer in a reducing atmosphere or a vacuum atmosphere after the firing step carried out in the oxidizing atmosphere.

4. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 2, wherein the inert gas atmosphere is one comprising at least one inert gas selected from the group consisting of rare gases, carbon dioxide gas and nitrogen gas and the reducing atmosphere is one comprising at least one reducing gas selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and lower alcohols.

5. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 2, wherein the vacuum atmosphere comprises at least one inert gas selected from the group consisting of rare gases, carbon dioxide and nitrogen; at least one oxidizing gas selected from the group consisting of oxygen and water vapor; at least one reducing gas selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and lower alcohols; or a mixed gas comprising the inert gas and the oxidizing gas or the reducing gas.

6. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 1, wherein the oxidizing atmosphere comprises oxygen, water vapor, oxygen-containing gases or water vapor-containing gases.

7. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 1, wherein the metal fine particles and/or the alloy fine particles are those each comprising an organic compound adhered to the surroundings thereof.

8. (Withdrawn) A transparent electrode being composed of the transparent conductive film formed by the method as set forth in claim 1.

9. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 2, wherein the method further comprises the step of firing the coated layer in a reducing atmosphere or a vacuum atmosphere after the firing step carried out in the oxidizing atmosphere.

10. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 3, wherein the inert gas atmosphere is one comprising at least one inert gas selected from the group consisting of rare gases, carbon dioxide gas and nitrogen gas and the reducing atmosphere is one comprising at least one reducing gas selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and lower alcohols.

11. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 3, wherein the vacuum atmosphere comprises at least one inert gas selected from the group consisting of rare gases, carbon dioxide and nitrogen; at least one oxidizing gas selected from the group consisting of oxygen and water vapor; at least one reducing gas selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and lower alcohols; or a mixed gas comprising the inert gas and the oxidizing gas or the reducing gas.

12. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 2, wherein the oxidizing atmosphere comprises oxygen, water vapor, oxygen-containing gases or water vapor-containing gases.

13. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 3, wherein the oxidizing atmosphere comprises oxygen, water vapor, oxygen-containing gases or water vapor-containing gases.

14. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 4, wherein the oxidizing atmosphere comprises oxygen, water vapor, oxygen-containing gases or water vapor-containing gases.

15. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 5, wherein the oxidizing atmosphere comprises oxygen, water vapor, oxygen-containing gases or water vapor-containing gases.

16. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 2, wherein the metal fine particles and/or the alloy fine particles are those each comprising an organic compound adhered to the surroundings thereof.

17. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 3, wherein the metal fine particles and/or the alloy fine particles are those each comprising an organic compound adhered to the surroundings thereof.

18. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 4, wherein the metal fine particles and/or the alloy fine particles are those each comprising an organic compound adhered to the surroundings thereof.

19. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 5, wherein the metal fine particles and/or the alloy fine particles are those each comprising an organic compound adhered to the surroundings thereof.

20. (Previously Presented) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 6, wherein the metal fine particles and/or the alloy fine particles are those each comprising an organic compound adhered to the surroundings thereof.

21. (Currently Amended) The method for forming a transparent conductive film as set forth in claim 1, wherein the firing in an atmosphere which never undergoes any oxidation ~~and the firing in an oxidizing atmosphere are~~ is carried out at a temperature of not more than 300°C.